

BIBLE GUIDELINES FOR CLOTHING

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INTRODUCTION

By David Cloud

The following article by the late Bruce Lackey is like a cry in the wilderness today. There was a time, just a few years ago, when a message like this was heard from fundamentalist and independent Baptist pulpits across the land, but that is no longer the case. All too often, any kind of preaching about clothing has become an oddity, an embarrassment. The resistance of the rock & roll culture to such preaching is so pervasive that many pastors have decided to ignore matters of dress.

To do so, though, is to ignore the fact that clothing is a language. George Harrison of the Beatles, who rebelled against the way his father wanted him to act and dress, testified: “Going in for flash clothes, or at least trying to be a bit different ... was part of the rebelling. I never cared for authority” (Hunter Davies, *The Beatles*, p. 39). The designer who invented the mini-skirt admitted that her aim was to entice men and promote licentiousness. Vivienne Westwood, who helped create the rock punk look, said, “I think fashion is the strongest form of communication there is. ... It’s only interesting to me if it’s subversive: that’s the only reason I’m in fashion, to destroy the word ‘conformity’” (Jon Savage, *Time Travel: Pop, Media and Sexuality 1976-96*, p. 119).

Hair styles are also statements. Long hair on men and short hair on women are not merely harmless fashions but are statements of rebellion against God’s created order (1 Corinthians 11:14-15). The androgynous unisex image was not innocent. It was created by rock musicians who consciously intended to overthrow tradition. One of the rock songs of the 1960s called upon young men to grow their hair long and “let your freak flag show.” David Lee Roth of Van Halen testified: “[My long hair] is a flag. It’s Tarzan. I’ll always be anti-establishment” (cited by John Makujina, *Measuring the Music*, p. 73). Dennis Wilson of the Beach Boys sported long hair and

popularized the "surfer cut" in the early 1960s. Commenting on the significance of this hair length, Wilson's biographer observes: "The 'surfer cut,' as it came to be known, was a radical thing to behold in 1962. Few parents would permit their sons to sport the look" (Jon Stebbins, *Dennis Wilson: The Real Beach Boy*, p. 24). Dennis Wilson was a rebel and his appearance was merely a reflection of this. Paul McCartney of the Beatles mockingly acknowledges their role in overthrowing sexual distinctions: "There they were in America, all getting house-trained for adulthood with their indisputable principle of life: short hair equals men; long hair equals women. Well, we got rid of that small convention for them. And a few others, too" (Barbara Ehrenreich, "Beatlemania: Girls Just Wanted to Have Fun," cited by Lisa Lewis, *The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media*, p. 102).

If ever there were a time in which preachers need to warn their people about clothing issues, it is today. Standards of morality are not to be left the pew or the home. It is the obligation of the preacher to set forth these things. Has God not given clear standards? We know that holiness is a matter of the heart, but is it not a matter of the body, as well? Every man knows that it is. What man has ever lusted after a woman's heart! How, then, can we ignore this part of Scripture and refuse to preach it boldly and uncompromisingly? That is what the New Evangelical does. He has determined that there are some things he will not preach. Separation is one of them. But the Bible speaks as much about moral separation as it does about ecclesiastical separation. The faithful fundamentalist cannot ignore either.

Those who are crying "legalism" today are hypocritical in this matter. They, too, draw lines for clothing, even as they decry the old-time fundamentalist for the lines he draws. For example, will they allow a woman to teach a Sunday School class in a bikini? Of course not. They draw lines. And if it is right to draw a line in clothing; it is wise to draw the line at a biblical place.

Let's make a clear difference between ourselves and the world. Let's stand in the old paths. Those who are giving up high, plain standards of holiness in dress and are moving closer and closer to the fashions of the world should remember that the world is moving farther and farther from God's Word.

I commend to you the following excellent message by Pastor Bruce Lackey.

BIBLE GUIDELINES FOR CLOTHING

By Bruce Lackey (1930-1988)

The thing I want to talk to you about tonight is Christian clothing. What do we mean when we say “Christian clothing”? Is that some particular article? No, we can’t hang a particular suit or a particular dress up here tonight and say this is Christian. Rather, there are five questions that you need to ask yourself to answer the question, “What kind of clothing should I wear?” There are five questions, and I am going to support these by God’s Word.

I hope you will get these down, because you are going to face this all your life. Fashions are going to change and new things are going to be brought out all the time. There is no use in me making up a list of what is good and what is not, because that would change next year. So these five principles from God’s Word will help you to decide every single item, whether it be right or wrong to wear, male or female, adult or child.

IS IT WORN BY THE OPPOSITE SEX?

The first question is this: Is it worn by the opposite sex? Turn back to Deuteronomy 22:5 for our beginning. Here is our first principle. When I am trying to decide whether or not I should wear a certain thing, my first question is “Is that item worn by the opposite sex?” In other words, I as a man should not wear anything that a woman would wear. And a woman should not wear anything that a man would wear.

“The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God.”

I am well aware of the fact that people resent using this verse because it is in the Old Testament. And many times people say we can’t use that verse unless we are going to use the whole chapter. For instance, we wouldn’t want to use verse nine. A lot of people violate that verse by planting two or three different kinds of seeds in the same plot of ground. Similarly, we’ve all violated verse eleven about wearing garments with different kinds of cloth. Nearly everything we have on is made out of a weave of different things. So how can we take verse five and not take verse nine or verse eleven?

The answer is that any principle found in the Old Testament which is repeated in the New Testament is for us today.

Let me prove that to you. Keep your place at Deuteronomy and go over to 1 Corinthians 10. In 1 Corinthians 10 we have a book written by a grace preacher. Nobody can deny that the Apostle Paul was a grace preacher. He preached that we're not under the law but under grace, and he wrote about that time and time again. Without a doubt he is a New Testament preacher. But I want you to notice that in this entire chapter of 1 Corinthians 10 he constantly uses the Old Testament Scripture to prove something. Look at verses one and two: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." That was taken from Exodus 13 and 14, in which passage we read about the cloud, and about the Red Sea parting, and how they walked across on dry land, which was similar to being baptized. They were covered with the water, even though not a drop of it touched them. Paul is referring to the Old Testament. Look at verse three: "And did all eat the same spiritual meat." That refers to Exodus 16, when God gave the manna from Heaven. That was called spiritual food. Verse four: "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." That refers to Exodus 17, when Moses took his rod and struck the rock, and God gave gushing water out of that flinty rock.

Notice that he is referring to several Old Testament incidents. Verse five: "But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness." That is referring to Numbers 13 and 14. They refused to go into the land of Israel and inherit it, and they said, "We can't take it," and so God overthrew them in the wilderness. Many of them died.

Now look at verse six. "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted." You see. It's not wrong to use the Old Testament to teach New Testament Christians to do something right. Paul did it.

Let's keep on going. Verse seven: "Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." Here he refers to Exodus 22:6. The Apostle says, "Don't you be like that." Verse eight: "Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand." That is talking about Numbers 25. Verse nine: "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed

of serpents.” That is talking about Exodus 17. You remember about the brazen serpent being raised in the middle of the camp, and so on.

Look at verse ten: “Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.” That is found in Exodus 15, 16 and 17, among many other places; they murmured several times.

Now look at verse eleven: “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” Two times in these chapter, in verse six and in verse eleven, he tells us without a doubt that those Old Testament writings were for us today. It is a foolish and fictitious objection when someone says that we can’t use the Old Testament for us today. Here he very clearly outlines verse after verse, experience after experience in the Old Testament, to prove something that Christians ought to do right now. And that’s not the end. In the rest of the chapter he does it again and again.

We see the same thing in 1 Corinthians 9:9-10:

“For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.”

Here again Paul says that the things in the Law of Moses contain lessons for Christian living. We don’t use oxen today in western culture, and we don’t therefore have to be concerned about feeding oxen, but the abiding principle from this law is that the worker should be rewarded for his labor, whether in the physical or the spiritual realms.

Thus the Old Testament is for us today when rightly applied, and our rule in applying the Old Testament to Christian living is that any Old Testament principle repeated in the New Testament is for us today. Now you won’t ever find a New Testament verse that says observe the sabbath day. That is the reason we don’t do it. You won’t find any New Testament verse that says we are to kill an animal and have a blood sacrifice. That’s the reason we don’t do it. But anything commanded in the Old Testament and repeated in the New Testament is for us today.

Is the teaching of Deuteronomy 22:5 repeated in the New Testament? Let's look at 1 Corinthians 11, where Paul refers to the appearance of man and woman. Specifically he talks about hair, but very clearly in 1 Corinthians 11 the Apostle says that the man and the woman ought to be different in their appearance. Notice verses four and five: "Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven."

You see what he is saying? There is to be a difference between man and woman when they pray or prophesy. There is to be a difference. That is the same principle we saw back in Deuteronomy 22:5 -- "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment..." It is the same idea.

Paul goes on to talk about the length of the hair. Notice verses fourteen and fifteen: "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering." Once again he underscores the principle that the appearance of men and women is to be different. Consequently, we have the same principle in Deuteronomy 22:5 repeated right here in the New Testament.

Further, Deuteronomy 22 verses 9-11, though not repeated in the New Testament, teach the principle of separation which is taught in the New Testament. These verses teach that God hates mixture. Consider how they are worded:

"Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled. Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together. Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together."

The Jews were not allowed to mix seeds or different types of material or an ox with an ass. This is the principle of separation, and it is definitely repeated in the New Testament, though the New Testament focuses on its spiritual application. Consider the following Scriptures:

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6:24).

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you” (2 Corinthians 6:14-17).

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” (1 John 2:15-16).

All of these New Testament Scriptures teach that it is wrong for the believer to mix righteousness with unrighteousness or the world and Christ. We are separate from the evil things of the world. It is the same basic principle stated in Deuteronomy 22:9-10, though the Mosaic Law used carnal things to illustrate the principle while the New Testament uses spiritual.

Let me share something with you that is very interesting. I have in my library a book called The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge. It is one of the most beneficial books I have ever owned. It is simply a book of parallel references, just like the center reference column you have in your Bible, but it is greatly expanded. This book was printed over one hundred years ago, back when they weren't having many of the problems we are having today with women wearing men's clothes, and vice versa. So you couldn't say they were prejudiced about this subject when they put the cross references in that volume. The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge at Deuteronomy 22:5 has a parallel reference of 1 Corinthians 11:3-14. That's interesting, isn't it? You know what that proves? It proves that men that study the Bible, not just in our day but years ago, have seen that 1 Corinthians 11 contains the same principle that is stated in Deuteronomy 22:5.

I don't hesitate to use Deuteronomy 22:5 to prove that women ought not to wear men's clothes, and men ought not to wear women's clothes, any more than I would hesitate to use Psalm 23 at a funeral. You see, the truths are repeated in the New Testament.

I was also interested in what I found in the Keil and Deiletch commentary regarding this matter. That commentary was first printed more than a hundred years ago. Charles Spurgeon refers to

Keil and Deiletech. Yet Keil and Deiletech say that Deuteronomy 22:5 was written to maintain the sanctity of the distinction of the sexes which was established by the creation of man and woman. In other words, anybody who reads the Bible can see that all the way through in every age and every testament God has said that He wants men and women to look different. Consequently we ought not to wear clothing that applies to the opposite sex.

Of course, the main issue that we are facing here is the matter of pants on women. It matters not what you call them, whether blue jeans or slacks or pant suits. It is a main problem today. People like to argue about this. They say you can't condemn pants on a woman unless you are going to say that women can't wear belts, because men wear belts. Likewise you would have to say that women can't wear socks, or shirts, because men wear socks and shirts.

What do we say about this? Consider some simple things to keep in mind. First, we are talking about the obvious. We're not talking about some hidden thing, like a belt, that doesn't have anything to do with the sex of the person, that doesn't have anything to do with the body.

Second, what do you look like when you wear these clothes? What do you look like from a distance? You've had the same experience that I've had of being out in public and seeing somebody at a distance and not being really sure if that person is a male or a female. You can't tell by the clothes, because girls wear pants just like boys do. They wear T-shirts just like boys do. The boys often have their hair just as long as the girls [or the girls' just as short as the boys'], so you look at someone from a distance and you often cannot tell if the person is a male or a female. The only way you can tell is to look at those portions of the body that distinguish between male and female, and by the way, that is the Devil's reason behind all of it. That is what he wants you to look at. He doesn't want you to look at somebody's head; he wants you to look other places. That is one of the things that makes this so wrong, and we need to see that. We should not wear clothing which at a distance would make anybody wonder whether we are male or female. And we should not wear those types of clothing that focus attention on the wrong parts of our bodies.

The best place to start on this is when the child is born. If you start when the child is born, you won't ever have to make any changes. If you don't start then, you'll always be wondering when you should make this change. Just start right in the beginning. Cut the baby boy's hair like a

boy's hair should be cut, and don't put feminine clothes on him. Put pants on him. And if it is a girl, don't put pants on her; put a dress on her.

You see, all these questions that people argue about can be settled just by plain old common sense. The principle is to let the appearance be different enough that folks won't have any doubt. That's the way to answer it all. You don't have to get everybody's O.K. on this piece of clothing, or that one, just draw the line and determine to wear something that no one will ever have a doubt about. It's going to look like man's clothing. It's going to look like women's clothing.

What about women working out in the field? What about women working in factories? What about women who have to climb ladders? Don't they need something modest? Yes, they do need something modest. I used to see women out in the field picking cotton and so on. I used to see them wear overalls, but I also saw some of them put dresses on over their overalls. That was a common thing when I was a boy. Now I know that some of them didn't wear dresses over their overalls. Some of them did other things that were wrong, too. You know, too, there are some other things to wear, such as culottes, which are just as modest and still look feminine. That's what you ought to wear. If you can't buy any, get a sewing machine and learn how to sew. It's worth the expense and trouble to make that adjustment if you are going to have convictions.

Do not wear clothing that the opposite sex wears. And if you are in doubt about it, just don't and you will be safe. Just make sure that what you wear identifies you as a male or as a female, and not in a way that a person would have to look at the tempting zones of the body to tell whether you are a male or female. That is what the Devil wants you to do, and surely you don't want to cooperate with the Devil on this matter.

WHAT DOES IT MAKE OTHERS THINK OF ME?

Here is the second question you need to ask yourself about Christian clothing: What does it make others think of me? Lest you say it doesn't matter what other people think, let me read a verse or two of Scripture, and then let me read you some illustrations from modern literature which say that it does matter. In Proverbs 7:10 the Scripture has a warning to a young man against immorality: "And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart." God is warning about a woman dressed like a harlot. Now the question we ask is how is a harlot dressed? Have you ever seen a program on television in which they show a woman posing

as a prostitute? If you have watched any of the police shows you see that. She may be a prostitute; she may be posing as one; she may be an undercover agent; she may be the hero; she may be the victim; she may be the bad guy, whatever. You have seen that and you know how they are dressed. You know exactly that she is a prostitute before they ever tell you. Of course, they don't use that term; they use the word "hooker." Perhaps you have seen a television news broadcast which shows these women on the streets as they're out searching for business. All you have to do is look at the way they are dressed. The bad thing about is that some Christian people dress the same way. Now, you don't want anybody to think that about you. You might wonder if people really think that about you. Yes, they do.

Here's an article from McCall's magazine. McCall's is not a Christian magazine. The editors are not trying to defend the Christian faith or propagate the Bible. Here's an article in McCall's magazine entitled "What Your Intimate Behavior Says about You." I'm going to read this. It may be offensive to some, but the words are not nearly as offensive as the way some people dress. We need to be honest and frank about this thing. It's not going to be vulgar, but plain. The writer says,

"The female legs have also been the subject of considerable male interest as sexual signaling devices. The mere exposure of leg flesh has been sufficient to transmit sexual signals. Needless to say, the higher the exposure goes the more stimulating it becomes for the simple reason that it then approaches the primary genital zone."

That's what it's all about folks, and we had better wake up and realize it. He goes on to say, talking about the primary genital zone of the body,

"The first way to accentuate is to employ articles of clothing which underline the nature of the organ hidden beneath them. For the female this means wearing trousers."

Now the fellow that wrote this is not a preacher. As a matter of fact, in this article he is telling you how to send sexual signals by the way you dress. He continues:

"The way to emphasize the nature of the organs of the body is by wearing these clothing: trousers, shorts, or bathing costumes, that by their tightness reveal..."

This is what people think when they see you dressed this way. In the Family Weekly magazine they had a true or false question and answer section.

“Question: What you communicate wordlessly has more effect on people than what you say?
Answer: This is true. ... Question: People use clothes as a means of communicating with others?
Answer: True. Psychological studies at Britain’s University of Newcastle have demonstrated that people use clothes to tell others what they want them to believe about them.”

In other words the wearer is not trying to tell others what he is really like, but is trying to communicate his ideal self image, the kind of person he wishes he was. That’s what these experts say. What you wear says something about you.

I know very well that not everybody who wears the items of clothing mentioned in the McCall’s article has an immoral motive. Here’s what I’m trying to get you to see: Whether you like it or not, this is what other people think. As a Christian, somebody interested in holiness, in winning people to Christ and getting people’s minds off of sin, we need to go entirely the other way.

Whether you realize it or not, men look at certain portions of the body; and it doesn’t matter whether you think that is good, bad, or otherwise, they are going to do it. And if you wear clothing that attracts attention to that, you are just helping them in their sin. That’s why a dress, unless it’s too tight, is better than pants; because a dress does not draw the attention to that part of the body that people look at and lust after.

I have a lot of other articles, but I have time for only one more. An article appeared in the Richmond Times-Dispatch, Richmond, Virginia, and the writer of the article was Anthony Surbony, a personnel manager for a large corporation. He had interviewed more than 14,000 men for jobs in the past years that he had been there. He said that the length of a person’s hair tells a lot about him. Here’s a man after 14,000 interviews. He said the left-wingers generally have long hair.

“They reject self-discipline, authority, regulation, proven logic and reasoning. They are more easily swayed by popular opinions and propaganda. They tend to accept and do anything if somebody simply suggests it’s a style. Many employers find that they tend to be more dreamers

than does, where the reverse is the trend on men with short hair. Why is it so? Mainly it is due to a self-centered personality.”

I have been saying that for a long time.

There are certain things that I like about women that I don't like on men. I like for women to look nice, and it doesn't bother me at all to see a woman in front of a mirror primping and fixing her hair. But it just about makes me want to throw up to see a man do that, and I've seen men do that very thing, just like a woman.

I quote further from the article mentioned above. He said long hair indicates a self-centered personality.

“The liberal left-winger seems to be more selfish and only aspire to goals that will benefit them individually, regardless of what it costs to others. They actually believe that long hair is beautiful on a man and they feel naked without it. They try to make up for lack of ability by attracting attention, or becoming a sex symbol. Long haired liberals also reject the basic hunter/warrior responsibilities of man. They seem to think that society should provide for them and that someone else should guarantee protection. Or else they don't really believe that there are any enemies. In fact, some tend to bow before enemies, hoping to gain friendship.”

Men have lost the basic responsibility that God inbred into a human being to fight for what is his and to provide for what is his. Men reject that, and the first thing you know, they think the government owes them a living. They don't feel responsible to go out make a living any more. It all goes together. We must remember that this man is an expert in analyzing people.

When I am considering what kind of clothes to wear, I need to ask myself this question: What does it make other people think about me?

PREDOMINATELY, WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE DRESS THAT WAY?

Here is the third question we need to ask: Predominately, what kind of people dress that way?

Do you think that a policeman who is going to be an undercover agent would dress like I am dressed? Do you think his hair would be as short as mine is? No, sir. Every policeman that I have ever seen or heard about in the last twenty years that became an undercover agent around the bars and gambling dens let his hair grow long, and wore sloppy, slouchy clothes, because that is the kind of people they are trying to catch. I don't want to look like that kind of person. It's not because I think I'm better than they are. It's because when Jesus saved me, He jerked me up out of that. That's what I used to be. I don't want to be that anymore. I don't want folks to think I've gone back to that.

See, here is the third question. Predominately, what kind of people wear the kind of clothes you are thinking of wearing? If it's the wrong kind, you surely don't want to identify yourself with it.

MUST I USE THE ARGUMENTS OF THE WORLD TO JUSTIFY IT?

Here is the fourth question: Must I use the arguments of the world to justify it?

"Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (1 Cor. 1:20).

"That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2:5).

"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" (Col. 1:9).

If you read these verses you find out there is a difference between the wisdom of the world and spiritual wisdom. A Christian is in trouble when he has to resort to the wisdom of the world to justify what he is doing. We ought to be able to use the wisdom of God. If I am going to defend my position I ought to be able to go to the Bible and use spiritual wisdom to do it. God help us if we have to use worldly wisdom to justify our clothing or actions.

WILL IT CAUSE OTHERS TO STUMBLE?

Here is the fifth question: Will it cause others to stumble?

“It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak” (Rom. 14:21).

King David walked on his roof top. He was lazy; he was disobedient; he was out of God’s will. But also he saw a woman washing herself. She was either out in a yard where everybody could see her, or else she was in the house without the curtains drawn. And she was equally guilty in that lusting experience. I know David was out of God’s will and should have been out fighting the battles, because the Bible starts off that chapter by saying that it was the time that kings went out to war that David stayed at home. I know that was wrong, and she likewise was wrong in taking a bath where a man could see her.

What you do or what you wear, will it cause somebody to stumble? Now you might say the other fellow has to look out for himself. That is not what the Bible says. The Bible says, “It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.” We are responsible.

[Note from Brother Cloud: Under the topic of causing others to stumble, we would mention the SLIT SKIRTS AND DRESSES that are so popular in the female fashion industry today. The obvious purpose for this fashion is to tease men with the flashing effect that is created. It is strangely enticing. Even if the slit is below the knee the effect is very sensual. A few months ago we asked a group of young Bible college men if they were tempted sexually by slit skirts, and every one of them admitted that they are. This should speak volumes to Christian women and young ladies to avoid this immodest fashion.]

CONCLUSION

We have considered five good tests regarding clothing. Is it worn by the opposite sex? What does it make other people think of me? What kind of people dress that way? Must I use the argument of the world to defend it? Will it cause anybody else to stumble?

In closing, let me encourage you to have some Christian convictions, and let me make some strong suggestions to you about these.

Number one, make sure your convictions are biblically based. When you believe something is wrong, you had better have a good Bible reason for believing it. You ought to know where the Bible talks about that, and if you don't think you can remember it, write it down so you can show people. Have biblically based convictions, not just opinions.

Number two, when you have a conviction, be firm. Don't waver no matter what crowd you are with, no matter what environment you find yourself in. If it is wrong to wear a bathing suit walking down the street, it is wrong to wear one in the swimming pool. The water doesn't have anything to do with it. That is why you have to be careful about where you go swimming. Do you expose your body to the lustful thoughts of others? They are going to think it whether you like it or not. Be firm in your convictions.

Number three, be kind when you have convictions. Don't be a smart alek. When the time comes to express yourself, or to say no, or to give a reason, be kind about it. Learn your reasons, and know them, and don't be nervous, and don't be angry, and don't be snappy. Be kind about it.

Number four, don't act superior. Don't act like you are better than somebody else. That's the first charge they are going to make against you, I guarantee you. Anytime you ever have a conviction about anything, whether it be about music, or drinking liquor, others are going to say that you think you are better than they are. People have been saying that for centuries. That is not anything new. So don't act superior. Just let them know you aren't going to do that thing.

Number five, if you have to talk to somebody about these things deal with the heart first. All of this is a matter of the heart. You might get somebody straightened out on the matter of the clothes they ought to wear and they still be just as lost as they were before you met them. Before I talk to anybody about clothes or anything else, the first thing I want to know is what about the heart? Have you been saved? Acts 15:9. Has your heart been purified by faith? Romans 10:9. Have you believed in your heart that God raised Christ from the dead? The first thing I want to know is about the heart and salvation. All that I said here tonight applies to those who are saved. If you haven't been saved, it's not going to help you your soul one way or the other to change your clothes. It's not going to help at all. If Jesus does not live in your heart, that is your first need. You first have to come to Christ.

If you are saved it is still a matter of the heart. If I were talking to a Christian about this, the first thing I would want to talk to him about would be the heart. Is your heart right with God? If your heart's not right with God, you are not going to be able to understand any of this. You're going to resent every argument, and resent anybody even bringing up this discussion.

The Bible talks about the heart. Hebrews 10:22--"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." God is talking to Christian people there. And in verses 24 and 25, "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." It's a matter of the heart.

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